



FACT SHEET

DEER HUNTER


TICK-BORNE DISEASE PROTECTION

Tick Life Stages
Larva Nymph Adult
Approximate Sizes


Knowing and using the following information will help you better protect yourself from the risk of acquiring a tick-borne disease while deer hunting.


- ❑ Ticks found on deer can transmit such human diseases as: Lyme disease, human granulocytic ehrlichiosis, human monocytic ehrlichiosis, and babesiosis.


- ❑ You can protect yourself by doing the following:


 **Plan ahead and treat clothing with permethrin based repellent, commercially available from outdoor suppliers. FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS FOR USE PRINTED ON THE LABEL.** Permethrin binds strongly to fabric and persists through multiple washings. Once dry, this repellent has NO ODOR. When ticks contact permethrin-treated fabric, they become too sick to bite you. Store treated clothing in a plastic bag to preserve effectiveness. Do **NOT** apply permethrin to skin. Do **NOT** use pet flea and tick collars on yourself, as such use may result in skin absorption and toxic reactions.


 **Tuck pants inside boots and shirts inside pants to keep ticks out.** Once ticks crawl onto you, they will climb upward until they find an opening in your clothing.


 **Check yourself thoroughly each day for attached ticks.** Studies show that ticks must generally be attached for more than 18 hours in order to effectively transmit germs, and that **prompt and proper removal prevents infection.**

 **Remove attached ticks properly.** Grasp the tick's mouthparts against the skin with pointed tweezers and pull back slowly and steadily with firm tension until the tick releases. Do not squeeze its body or apply any substance to the tick while it is attached, including petroleum jelly, nail polish, nail polish remover, alcohol, repellent, or a lighted match. Such actions may force infective fluid into the wound. After removal, wash the wound site and apply antiseptic. Save the tick in a clean, dry container and store in your freezer for future reference should you get sick.

 **Avoid hanging deer carcasses near your home unless you place a tub of water with a little detergent in it under the deer to catch ticks.** Ticks on the deer will start dropping off as the carcass cools and continue to drop for several days. Unfed ticks looking for a host could attach to you, or ticks that have already fed could lay eggs, thereby creating a local tick infestation.

 **Avoid contact of your eyes, nose, mouth, and any broken skin with deer blood.** Wear waterproof gloves when field-dressing or butchering deer, and DO NOT splash blood into your eyes, nose, or mouth, since these are potential routes of infection. The risk of acquiring a tick-borne disease from contact with deer blood is not fully understood, and therefore prudent protective measures are advisable.

 **Do not eat raw or rare meat.** Discontinue ritual acts such as eating a bite of raw meat from the first kill. Cooking venison to at least a medium doneness kills germs.

 **Symptoms** for tick-borne diseases are often flu-like, and may include one or more of the following: fever, headache, fatigue, chills, rash, joint pain, muscle aches, loss of appetite, eye pain, vomiting, decreased concentration, memory loss, sleeplessness, restlessness, partial face paralysis (Bell's palsy), and delirium. If you know or suspect you may have been bitten by a tick, and have any of these symptoms, seek medical attention.

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